





D Heaney  
West Denovan Church  
Denovan Road  
Dunipace  
FK6 6BJ

*By email*

25 April 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

**PLANNING APPLICATION – P/15/0022 FUL – DEVELOPMENT OF LAND TO FORM HOLIDAY PARK WITH RAISED DECK MOUNTED CHALETS, CAMPING PODS, DECK AT LAND TO THE SOUTH WEST OF DENOVAN HOUSE, DENNY**

Please find my observation on the information supplied in support of the development by the applicant in relation to the above. Having considered the additional information provided, I do not believe that this makes any material differences to the decision originally made by Falkirk Council Planning Department and would like the Falkirk Planning Review Committee to support and uphold the decision made by Falkirk Council and to refuse planning permission for this proposed development.

Falkirk Council refused planning permission as the development is contrary to a total of 16 Falkirk Council policies. The development *remains* contrary to 16 policies, despite the alterations suggested by the developer.

My earlier objections to the proposed development remain and any further information provided by the developer has not altered the basis of these objections. The developer was asked for information on the following:

**1. Information in relation to the justification as to why the proposed development in terms of matters such as its scale, siting and design is appropriate at this countryside location.**

The developer has not provided any additional information that justifies the economic benefits vis a vis the detrimental impact on the environment, the local area or the historic buildings and settings it is proposed to be located within. The small changes proposed don't compensate for the large negative impact that this development will have.

**2. Ecological Assessment including a Phase 1 Habitat survey and protected species survey.**

The biodiversity of the woodland offers a rich variety of flora and fauna which will be destroyed by the development.

Many trees have been felled on the site since planning permission has been applied for.

The ecological survey appears to suggest that the woodland is not managed well and it is worth remembering that developer has been in ownership of the site for +20 years and has shown little regard for positive management of the woodland site during that period.

The developer's ecological survey was conducted in a single walkover, in mid-March 2016 (contrary to the 10-12 surveys recommended by the British Trust for Ornithology).

It was also undertaken very early in the breeding season, and therefore not the ideal time to undertake a survey.

The survey identified 19 species of birds on site (table 7.4). Of those, two (the Mistle Thrush and Redwing) are on the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPBs) Red List – which is for species identified as having the **highest conservation priority, that are globally threatened and with species needing urgent action**.

Additionally four species were identified on the RSPBs Amber List – that is species with **unfavourable conservation status in Europe**.

The developers ecological survey pointed out that the development encroaches on the significant areas of ground flora and the camping pods should be moved “so that they are not within any stand of bluebells or wild garlic or woodrush, as the siting of them within stands of native ground flora and subsequent use would significantly damage the stands beyond an acceptable level and would result in long-term damage, and so be a negative impact on the local biodiversity value of the woodland (p19)”. That is - destroy the habitat.

The maps produced by the developer do not show the relocation of the pods as there is limited options for moving them elsewhere due to the small size of useable space on the site.

Poisonous – the developers ecological survey points out ground covered with garlic and bluebells is not suitable for camping as it smells unpleasant and, significantly, bluebells are a poisonous species. The survey points out that “*siting camping pods on ground covered by these species is inappropriate on both an ecological and amenity basis*” (p19). The survey makes recommendations for moving these – but according to the maps, the developer has not taken this advice on board.

The scale and nature of the development is not in proportion to the carrying capacity of the available land area – the road and carpark alone will take up much of the land area with no real economic or tourism benefit.

The ecological survey recommends increasing the height of the chalets to allow 1.5m ground coverage (p18). This will have a major visual impact from Denovan Road, Denovan House and impact on the wider area including the popular view from (the recently replaced) Dale Bridge northwards.

The ecological survey recommends restricting access to the bluebell areas at certain times, which is inconsistent with a holiday park.

The ecological survey was inconclusive on the bat populations and suggested further works on this.

### **3. An assessment of the proposals effect on the designed landscape of Denovan, including a desk top assessment/ survey to provide baseline information of Denovan Estate/ original historic features.**

1. As mentioned in my earlier submission the nature and size of the proposed development is not appropriate in the setting – with housing (including listed buildings) bordering the site on all sides. The development will impact on the views towards the historic Denovan House, being directly in front of the grounds. The removal of the old sand stone wall (note this hasn't collapsed it has been taken down) will further undermine the historic character of the road.

**4. An assessment of the proposals effect on Denovan House as a listed building including a desk top assessment /survey to provide baseline information of Denovan Estate/ original historic features.**

The information provided is not correct (4.2) as the proposed built form is **not** remote from the house, modest in scale or separated by the respective woodland areas. The development will have a major impact on the setting, character and appearance of the listed Denovan House, as any site visit will demonstrate. The largest building is called the reception building, but there is no information on this – is this where the proposed café will be and if so, what is the clubhouse? If this is where the café is situated, is this open to the public and if so, is clearly contrary to countryside planning policy.

## **5. A visual landscape assessment including an assessment of the visual effects from the adjacent road, nearby dwellings and the wider countryside to the south**

The development will be highly visually intrusive. The land will be infilled by up to 2.37 m in places to make the road levels accessible. This represents a major visual impact on the historic landscape. The nature of the raised chalets (being further raised to mitigate on the ecological impact) will have a major visual impact on Denovan Road and Denovan House, moreover the raised nature of the chalets will overlook neighbouring houses and gardens and be visually intrusive.

The site is in an area with no street light and therefore lighting will be necessary on site for the safety of the public. There is no information provided on this and the potential for light pollution this will cause in a rural area or any mitigation methods that might be applied. This will have a major visual impact on the location.

Comparing camping pods to movable tents is an unreasonable description – the pods will require footpaths, external lighting and hard standing to function. The moving of these (length 3m x breadth 3m x height 2.5m) will be a major task and will require a lorry which will cause severe impact on the subsoil and vegetation. This will therefore have a major landscape and ecological impact, rather than the benign picture that the developer is attempting to paint.

## **6– 10 Woodland impact and mitigation**

The tree report and the developer's commitment to mitigation methods are not convincing. The felling of major mature trees has taken place to the detriment to the woodland environment. The danger is that the removal of the few mature trees that are remaining will lead to the destruction of the very landscape that the developer wants to capitalise on. This will make the community of Dunipace a substantially poorer place to live. Planting new trees is no substitute for the removal of mature trees, in environmentally sustainable terms or in local landscape or nature conservation terms.

## **11 A drainage Strategy**

Unfortunately the drainage strategy is absent. There is no drainage strategy to comment on. This is a significant omission from the developer and SEPA guidance is that developers should liaise with planning prior to proposals is very clear -

*"Any proposals for non mains sewerage systems must take account of the requirements of building regulations and should be discussed with local planning authorities at an early stage and well before any planning application is made".* The site is problematic on many levels from a foul water system. There is inadequate space and topography for a soakaway system and there is not enough room for a reedbed system. The burn that the soakaway would go into goes directly into the River Carron where extensive efforts are being made to increase the population of salmon with classroom initiatives with CATCA (Communities Along the Carron Association). The organisation has won major awards for its work along the River Carron.

**12 Information on the design, construction and location of the pods, how they would integrate into the proposed development and what services would be required by them such as electricity.**

Comparing camping pods to movable tents is an unreasonable description – the pods will require footpaths, external lighting and hard standing to function. The moving of these (length 3m x breadth 3m x height 2.5m) will be a major task and will require a lorry which will cause severe impact on the subsoil and vegetation. This will therefore have a major landscape and ecological impact, rather than the benign picture that the developer is attempting to paint.

**13. The status of the timber cabin located on the site of the proposed development.**

Unfortunately, the developer or his agent are confused in their recollection of the history of the cabin. This was not erected as a shed as described in the submission, when the developer owned Denovan House, but was erected after the house was sold. The cabin was registered as the address of the company Denovan Village Ltd, with Companies House in January 2015 by Ms Jillian and Helen Edmund.

The developer has contravened planning regulations by siting a chalet on the site without going through the planning process. This disregard for the due process does not bode well for the future.

**Conclusion**

Despite having gone through various stages, the proposed development still remains incomplete, with information missing, for example there is no information on the map of the location of footpaths and associated lighting on site. There is no information on what the buildings referred to as ‘the Cabin’, ‘the Reception’ and ‘the Clubhouse’ are. There is no information on what the reception building is for. Where will the proposed Café be sited? There is no information on the depth of excavation that will be required to site the reception; there is no information on the sewage system or the impact on the neighbouring houses; there is no information on the light pollution in the area; there is no information on any measures that the developer will seek to introduce to mitigate against any antisocial behaviour that may occur.

Road safety still remains a major concern as the route is considered locally as a ‘rat run’ and the proposed access – on a blind bend, on a very narrow road, on a hill with 60mph limit is not appropriate. Moreover, the proposed reception building will act as a barrier to visibility to the east of the site and if the neighbouring property (at Denovan House) were to erect a solid fence on the bordering land, there would be inadequate visibility to the east on road safety terms. Despite the changes to numbers of units, there is still inadequate parking proposed on the site. Denovan Road would become an overspill car park adding to the danger for other road users. The reduced size of development (chalets, café, roads, footpaths (not shown on the map) toilet and shower blocks, pods, and car park, now with 13 parking spaces will do very little to protect the habitats on which it is sited. There is no information on where the disabled parking will be and therefore the impact that this will have.

In summary, I would urge the Planning Review Committee to reject this application.

Yours faithfully  
Donna Heaney

**From:** [Sobieraj, Antonia](#)  
**To:** [Sobieraj, Antonia](#)  
**Subject:** Planning application P/15/0022/FUL at land to the south west of Denovan House Denny  
**Date:** 26 April 2016 11:29:55

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By email 26/04/2016

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to raise again my concerns regarding this application, and the further information that the applicant has submitted.

#### DRAINAGE

The issues regarding drainage have not been addressed. Sewage waste from potentially 100 people has not been clearly detailed. There would appear to be insufficient ground for an appropriately sized reed bed to service a site of this size.

#### CAR PARKING

I note there is no further reference to the issue of car parking. If the site is for 100 people, and there is only space for 16 cars, where are the other cars going to be parked. Denovan Road is a narrow winding road with a national speed limit, which at the best of times is dangerous for pedestrians and other road users, without having to negotiate a number of parked vehicles. The plans do not show the necessary infrastructure which is required for this to be safe for all persons using and living in the vicinity of the site.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY/FIRE

I am also greatly concerned with the large number of calor gas bottles which would be required on site. Has a survey been completed with regards to the fire hazard that this will create? There are a number of residential properties in close proximity, two of which are listed buildings.

#### ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The ecological survey which was completed highlighted major concerns and failed to address the issues of rare species which have been identified in the area, including the red squirrel which has been seen on site. Also if order for this ecological survey to be comprehensive, this would need to be conducted over a greater period of time. The applicant has owned the site for a number of years and to date has shown little interest in land management or community issues.

The applicant would appear to be picking and choosing the points which he believes are in his favour and completely ignoring the areas of concern, such as the points I have raised. These matters have a huge impact on local residents. The applicant no longer resides in this area and is failing to prove details on the issues which will directly impact on the residents of Denovan Road.

In summary, I would urge the Planning Review Committee to reject this application.

Yours Faithfully  
Kirsten McGhee

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**From:** [Sobieraj, Antonia](#)  
**To:** [Sobieraj, Antonia](#)  
**Subject:** Planning application P/15/0022/FUL development of land for raised deck chalets and camping pods adjacent to Denovan House, Denny  
**Date:** 26 April 2016 23:36:43

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Dear Ms Sobieraj

I write in response to a recent letter I received regarding the above subject. I realise my correspondence may be slightly overdue, however, I have been on holiday and only just returned. I do hope my response on the day of the deadline will be included.

I have now had the opportunity to view the further submissions from the proposer addressing the various issues raised at a previous meeting.

I believe there are still many causes for concern and I continue to strongly object to this proposal.

I note that there will be a tree planting plan however I see that although many native species will be planted, they will initially be very small saplings with some varieties taking quite some time to mature. This will mean the site will be visible from Denovan Road and from neighbouring dwellings for many years to come before the proposed saplings have grown sufficiently. Most people in the area chose to buy their properties due to its rural location and for the peace and tranquillity this affords and not to look at a number of cabins and camping pods.

Denovan House and Denovan Church which are adjacent to the site are both of local historical interest and the proposed site does not sit comfortably nor sympathetically with the surrounding buildings.

I further note the bluebell wood is to be replanted and again this will take some considerable time to have the similar spectacular effect of the existing one. Why spoil something that is already there and has taken many years to establish?

From the drawings of the cabins, I can see they will have a decked area which by its very nature encourages holidaymakers to spend much of their time outside for meals and leisure time. I believe this will cause a noise nuisance to those residing in the local area. The area surrounding the site is generally quiet due to its rural location and any noise from those using the cabins will most certainly travel to nearby properties. I am aware there are persons in the neighbouring properties with young families and it is my opinion, especially in the long summer evenings, the noise disruption will be a considerable issue. In addition to this the camping pods have been described as a low budget option for walkers and cyclists. I am reluctant to stereotype but from past experience I know that budget accommodation does not only attract walkers and cyclists but those looking for a cheap getaway in order to drink alcohol and have something of a party. I am not against having fun by any means however this site is not the location for such budget accommodation and the proposer is not considering its neighbours quality of life.

I believe the jobs created at the site will be minimal, mostly part time and at best seasonal. The proposer states this will benefit the local economy however I believe the impact in this respect will be negligible.

Having used Denovan Road many times I know from experience that the road is very narrow. I do not believe the proposer has sufficiently rectified the access issue. The proposed access road is extremely close to a particularly bad bend in the road which up to a certain point is a blind bend. The increase in traffic should the site be allowed to go ahead, would most certainly result in a serious road safety issue which will impact on site users, local residents and those who use the road from the motorway to reach Dunipace and then Denny.

I have also read the report relating to the diversity of wildlife in the local area. Although the report states there is nothing particularly remarkable in the way of established wildlife I believe this does not give justification for the woodland to basically be torn up for purely commercial purposes. The fact that the natural environment is not rare or of particular special interest does not mean it is not appreciated by those living nearby, residents of the surrounding areas of Dunipace and Denny and those passing through whether they be visitors or daily users of Denovan Road. In short I believe the landscape would be completely spoiled should the proposed development go ahead.

In summary I wish it to be noted that I continue to strongly object to the proposed development for the reasons I have listed above.

Please do keep me updated with any further information as it becomes available.

Kind Regards

Aileen McGhee

For  
Sent from my iPad

**From:**   
**To:** [Sobieraj, Antonia](#)   
**Subject:** Planning Application P/15/0022/FUL Written Submission   
**Date:** 26 April 2016 14:07:55

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Dear Antonia

Thank you for your time, guidance and assistance in dealing with the above, my response is;

The original submission was refused based on the following assessments-

**Structure Plan Policies, Policy Econ.7**

**Local Plan Policies, Policy EP16, Policy EQ19, Policy EQ14, Policy EQ18, Policy EQ24, Policy EQ25, Policy EQ26, and Policy ST11**

In the refusal report **Section 8 Recommendation**

Assuming the refusal is based on the hierarchy of policies, the additional information provided by the applicant does not satisfy the points as the responses are site based not on the detailed wider requirements of the policies.

Dealing with the Written Submission my comments are,

- On the drawings there is no detail on how the west boundary is treated is this left open for site based people to wander onto adjacent properties?
- On the drawings 12.5 car parking places are shown, there is no detail on the adequacy or breakdown of disabled, visitors and staff parking spaces. I would suggest that the proposal as set out would lead to dangerous and nuisance parking on Denovan Road and place the residents and users of Denovan Road at risk of accident.
- The drainage proposal is for a septic tank and run off into the burn adjacent to Denovan Road. In bad weather this burn overflows as evidenced by the sand bags used by the house at the bottom of the hill to control flood water. This raises serious environmental issues as up to 100 people could be using the site facilities.
- On the drawings the reception area shows toilets and showers, I can only see 2 showers (male and female) would this be adequate for the number of potential users? Also I can't see any disabled toilets or showers.
- Denovan Road is a country road with no pavements or street lighting. It is a 60mph road with blind bends, agricultural use, walkers and horse riders in my view, this is not a road which could carry the additional burden which would be placed on it safely.

In the Additional Submission Report

- **Section 1.4** 'Re-site some of the chalets in order to reduce their visibility from Denovan Road' this is an elevated site where it is almost impossible to merge the proposed chalets and the camping pods which are adjacent to the road into the wood.
- **Section 1.5** Where comments are made to the collapsed wall Dr. Edmunds along with his employees were witnessed removing the wall. The wall like all boundaries (fences, hedges or walls) need maintained and collapsed walls reinstated and maintained not used as a reason to create a drive or road.

**Section 1.6** Comments are made regarding 'This somewhat neglected and deteriorating woodland' as the applicant has been the owner of this woodland for several years and neglected the woodland I have concerns regarding the proposal and future ability and financial pressure to manage the woodland.

- **Section 1.7** 'The elevation of the chalets on stilts addresses the sloping site' this negates the comments in **Section 1.4** where the chalets will have reduced visibility.
- **Section 1.8** I disagree with this conclusion that the issues have been addressed. There are assumptions and issues glossed over without addressing the core details.

While I understand the council's willingness to give the applicant every opportunity to submit a detailed and comprehensive submission through the review process and some detail has been given on the local site, it is my view the refused application should be upheld. The Written Submission does not meet either the council's Structure Plan Policies or Local Plan Policies which take priority over local site detail.

Kind regards

Geoffrey Swift  
Denovan West Lodge

## **DENOVAN VILLAGE HOLIDAY PARK**

### **RESPONSE TO THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS**

**SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF  
DENOVAN VILLAGE LIMITED**

**May 2016**

## **1.0 GENERAL COMMENTS**

1.1 This response is provided on behalf of Denovan Village Holiday Park following further submissions by third party interests to his request for the Review of the planning officer's decision on his planning application on land adjacent to Denovan House, Dunipace. A total of 8 separate letters are noted. The terms of the further responses received appear, in part, to misunderstand the nature/impacts of the proposals, to fail to consider the information submitted explaining the proposals and, to a significant extent, to exaggerate any potentially negative impacts and fail to consider these pragmatically against the nature/benefits of the development being proposed. There is considered little benefit in responding to the comments on a point by point basis rather recurring themes will be addressed under the headings set out below. This response should be considered in conjunction with the further information provided on behalf of Denovan Village Holiday Park in March, 2016.

1.2 To place the proposal in context, this is a development aimed at assisting the (important and growing) tourism offer/economy in the Falkirk Council area. Private investment, as in this case, is required to deliver additional facilities, bedspaces, etc to build on the central and accessible location enjoyed by the area and the undoubted successes of the substantial investment related to the Falkirk Wheel, the Kelpies, and the array of other local attractions and facilities. The Council has a Strategic Objective to make the district a "*prime destination for day and short-break visitors drawn by an attractive and accessible network of heritage, cultural and outdoor activities*" and in order to assist reaching this objective private investment in tourist related ventures, as in this case, will need to be encouraged/delivered or the related benefits to the local area/economy will not be fully realised.

1.3 With respect to the present planning application it is noted that there have been supporting and positive comments from Falkirk Council's Economic Development Service and support in principle from VisitScotland for the benefits that would arise. The development will bring significant additional investment in tourism infrastructure in the local area in addition to employment opportunities and further spending in the local economy arising from the additional visitors. There is a sound business plan underpinning the proposals and funding can be secured in order to deliver the development and its related benefits. This must surely be seen as a significant positive benefit of the development.

## **2.0 SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

2.1 The additional comments made through the third party letters (the main points) can be categorised under the following headings (see below). As indicated above, many of the responses appear to result from a failure to fully understand the nature, scale, impacts and benefits of the proposed development and it is unclear from some whether

comments are influenced by some personal issues with Dr Edmund (which clearly plays no part in any valid assessment of the planning merits of the case). There are also some claims which are simply too extreme to have any degree of credibility.

2.2 There remains a mistaken belief that the site has some protected status presently and that its ecological value is significant when the objective evidence clearly indicates otherwise. There is also a patent failure to recognise that all development will have impacts and that it's the mitigation of these impacts and the benefits of the development that need to be weighed up as part of the assessment process. The issues of concern can be categorised as follows (*in italics*) with the applicant's response to the issue set out directly below: -

- ***Justification for the development***

The justification for the development has been clearly set out and there is, in short, support from Falkirk Council's Economic Development Service and from VisitScotland (as set out in earlier submissions), whom, with all due respect to the third party respondents, will have a far clearer and unbiased view on this matter.

- ***Ecological Impacts***

The "*Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey*" submitted concludes that none of the habitats within the study area were notable for their rarity, quality, or extent, and the woodland was dominated by common lime, and non-native species such as sycamore and horse chestnut. No protected species have been recorded within the site (despite claims by some parties). Diseased trees and some of poor quality are also in evidence. In effect, the woodland is unremarkable and lacking in native diversity appropriate to this area, although the woodland ground flora is worthy of protection and management to ensure its long-term future. A number of changes to the development form have been informed by the ecological assessment. The retention of the bluebells and other ground cover plants has been addressed as far as practicable and the applicant remains open to looking at further strategies to enhance the bluebell woodland (including translocation). The construction of the chalets on stilts will allow ground cover plants to spread into/be retained in these areas (below and adjacent to the chalets). All in all, the positive management and replanting of the woodland is seen as a positive outcome with some further mitigation of ecological impact also recommended in agreement with Falkirk Council as part of the positive future provision/management of the site.

- ***Visual Impacts***

There is a large degree of irony when considering the concerns expressed by certain residents re visual impact, particularly when considering the condition of some adjacent properties, particularly Denovan Mains Farm. The closest chalet to Denovan Road would be approximately 40 metres distant and, while raised on stilts, these structures are all constructed in timber and located within extensive areas of retained/new

woodland planting and maintenance. The Reception building is closer to Denovan Road but lower down, again of timber (woodland) appearance, and its visual impact would be mitigated by a combination of the existing woodland/hedge planting and the supplementary planting proposed. The development will be seen but not unacceptable in this context.

- ***Impact on Denovan House***

The claims in this respect are ill founded and simply incorrect. The site is entirely separate from the listed building and if there are glimpse views between the existing house and the proposed built development then this is the extent of any impact arising. There is no impact on the Designed Landscape of the setting of the building. Claims of overlooking appear as nonsense.

- ***Woodland impact and mitigation***

The application site was indeed within the ownership of Dr Edmund over the period when he owned Denovan House. There is little doubt that this area, as with the full extent of the land ownership, would have benefited from some positive maintenance over that period but its physical and functional detachment from the main house did not result in this being a priority. The woodland area does require investment and the means by which to deliver this is through this planning application. While the development will necessitate the removal of a number of trees (many of poor quality), as outlined in the tree report previously submitted, the development includes positive plans to plant 150 new native trees in order to diversify and enhance the long term quality and appearance of the woodland in addition to the introduction of positive management. In short, this somewhat neglected and deteriorating woodland resource would benefit from targeted and beneficial new planting and maintenance in order to sustain its long term contribution, visually and ecologically, to the local area. It is accepted that the loss of some mature trees will be required in order to facilitate the proposed development but the replanting of a range of native species and the active future management of the woodland resource (creating a bluebell woodland) has to be seen as a significant benefit of the development more than off-setting any perceived negative impacts. There are no detrimental impacts on the woodland area or on the Designed Landscape arising from this development, rather there is replanting and positive management in order to ensure longevity and a positive contribution to the visual and ecological environment locally.

- ***Drainage arrangements/impacts***

The foul drainage is being addressed by a septic tank and the surface water by a sustainable drainage system. The use of porous surfacing and localised soakaways will address any “flooding” concerns expressed by neighbours. The final drainage arrangements would be agreed with Falkirk Council prior to the development commencing.

- ***Existing storage building/log cabin***

It is confirmed by the former owner of Denovan House that the existing storage building/cabin was constructed prior to the sale of the house to the present owners. Indeed, this structure was used to store furniture from the house when the Edmund family moved out.

- ***Overlooking and privacy***

As indicated, the closest chalet is approximately 40 metres distant from Denovan Road with the closest properties on the other side of the road and not directly opposite the closest chalet. In short, there would be no material overlooking or amenity issues arising. In addition, as a result of distance, topography and retained vegetation, there is no overlooking to Denovan House. No overlooking or privacy issues would arise.

- ***Additional traffic on Denovan Road***

Denovan Road is not a high speed road, there appears confusion between the prevailing speed limit (which is theoretical) and the actual speed of traffic. The nature of the road will impact traffic speeds and it is clear that the road already copes well with a level of daily traffic. The development would add to this but in a manner spread over the day (not at peak times due to the nature of the use) and it is not considered that this use, in addition to present daily use, would introduce any material road safety issues. The site access is well located at a point of very good visibility and there is access direct from the site to the defined Core Path Network.

- ***Insufficient parking provision***

Parking provision beyond that presently shown can be provided for where required. This can be the subject of a planning condition related to monitoring and further provision as appropriate. Parking outwith the car park is also provided for on the top road adjacent to the chalets along the northern site boundary.

- ***Safety - Calor gas for the camping pods***

As with all chalet, caravan, and camping sites, any Calor gas products have to be properly stored and used. In this case the camping pods would not have any gas (they are in effect tents) with the chalets having piped gas from a central gas tank (installed and operated in accordance with health and safety requirements). There is no reason to consider safety to be a matter of concern in this case.

- ***Permanence/construction of the camping pods***

The camping pods do not have any service connections, they are literally wooden tents which can be readily moved/sited as required.

- ***Types of people the development would attract***

It appears that some of the residents would not like to see the kind of people who would go on holiday/take short breaks to woodland chalets or go camping to be associated with the area. How elitist! There is probably nothing more that requires to be stated in response to this matter and I am sure that the Committee will reach its own conclusions. For the record, the site operators are seeking to provide a 4 star self-catering holiday site with full disabled facilities – all exactly as it should be.

- ***Lack of facilities/attractions in the local area***

There is no lack of facilities or attractions in the local and Falkirk Council area. Based on this response why would anyone ever go anywhere? Again, claims without either thought or foundation.

- ***Unsuitable for disabled visitors***

The applicants have specifically designed parts of the development to cater for disabled persons. The access to the northern boundary and the 3 chalets at this level (with parking on the existing surfaced road) are all intended to cater for disabled visitors.

- ***Issues with the Reception building***

The use of this is primarily related to the Holiday Village. It may also potentially, with agreement from Falkirk Council, serve walkers and other visitors to the area but it is generally a low key use with limited impacts.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The concerns expressed by the third party respondents are noted and it is considered that these may be satisfactorily addressed as part of the development. There is underlying support for this innovative tourist based proposal from Falkirk Council's Economic Development Service and from VisitScotland. This is a well located site to "tap into" the range of visitor attractions in the Falkirk Council area and to support the Council's Local Development Plan strategic objective of making the Falkirk Council area a "*prime destination for day and short-break visitors drawn by an attractive and accessible network of heritage, cultural and outdoor activities*".

The site has some built heritage (Denovan House) and natural heritage (woodland and landscape impact) issues to be addressed as part of the development. It has been demonstrated above that there would be no adverse impact on Denovan House or its setting, including its non-inventory designed landscape. Additionally, landscape impact is limited and certainly minimal compared with some existing uses/sites within the immediate vicinity. The woodland is largely non-native, dominated by common lime, and other non-native species such as sycamore and horse chestnut, and none of the

habitats within the site were notable for their rarity, quality, or extent. While the woodland is unremarkable and lacking in native diversity appropriate to this area, it is accepted that the woodland ground flora is worthy of protection and management to ensure its long-term future. Plans to address this are contained within the current proposals and the applicant is happy to address this further with Falkirk Council as appropriate, including further mitigation arrangements. Some impacts are likely but these can be suitably mitigated by the location and form of development within the site in addition to the inclusion of positive measures to support flora and fauna (including bat and bird boxes). Some further assessment of identified trees for bat potential is required albeit it is not anticipated that this will preclude development within the site. A significant proportion of trees within the site are outwith the area to be developed in any event with the proposed new planting and active management of the woodland enhancing its quality in biodiversity and landscape terms. This is a positive outcome.

Based on all of the identified factors, the development has been altered in order to mitigate perceived impacts. Fundamentally this has been done without undermining the overall value of the development to the local economy or the potential for securing the related investment to deliver the proposals. Invariably, all development will have some impact but, in this case, the positives significantly outweigh any negative impacts. As indicated, the applicant remain fully prepared to engage with Falkirk Council to mitigate any legitimate concerns but this cannot be done at the expense of the deliverability of the project otherwise it becomes a pointless exercise. A reasonable interpretation of the issues impacting the site, an assessment of the detailed proposals, and the benefits of the proposals, including with suitable mitigation, indicate that the grant of planning permission is appropriate for the nature/scale of development being proposed subject to suitable safeguards being put into place.

The family behind the Holiday Village concept still maintain local connections in the Denny, Falkirk and central Scotland areas and remain committed to the success of this proposal. They would greatly welcome Falkirk Council's support to take this beneficial development forward in partnership.